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Texas A&M International University

**Texas Center for Border Economic and
Enterprise Development**

QUARTERLY REPORT
SUMMER 2009

Saber es poder: Knowledge Gives the Power to Act

Saber es poder. Knowledge is Power. This well-known Spanish proverb is repeated everywhere in border communities whether one visits classrooms, hospital waiting rooms, city council meetings or corporate boardrooms. In Laredo, we can attest to the fact that knowledge and the city's unique geographic location has brought tremendous power and impulse to almost all sectors of its economy.

For years, Texas A&M International University's Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development (TCBEED) has provided leadership and support to Texas border communities through research and activities that focus on economic development. Texas Center offerings have included the development and maintenance of a U.S.-México border socio-economic database as well as research related to border economic and business development. Training, education and technical assistance to border industrial, commercial and government entities are also among Center activities.

What I consider one of the most important aspects of all is that the Center shares research and data with both public and private entities so that through knowledge, one can make informed decisions about issues or projects he or she is about to undertake. The knowledge to power transfer happens at this stage, where one can turn study and

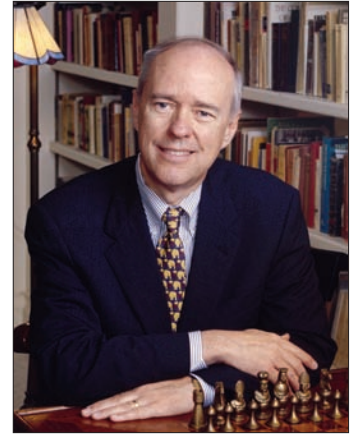
groundwork into action. Action, for its part, becomes a catalyst for power.

The *TCBEED Quarterly Report* seeks to inform readers about the Texas Center, its activities and new research. It is a promising publication given the fact that there are needs, which are specific to the border and can benefit from research tailored to its geographic area. Once we have knowledge and information, we can use it to impact our communities.

As competition for funding and business development grows in these lean economic times, there is clearly a need to be informed about economic issues that can affect our communities and the very results we seek. The Texas Center will continue to provide research closely related to border communities and the Quarterly Report will serve as its message conduit.

Saber es poder. The proverb resonates even louder today as we also operate in a global economy and a smaller world. What we know will give us the power to act, if not more.

—Dr. Ray M. Keck III, President, TAMIU



Dr. Ray M. Keck III
President, TAMIU

The Mission

To marshal the knowledge and expertise of Texas A&M International University's faculty, students, and staff to provide effective leadership and support Laredo and the surrounding area in their economic development efforts

Directors's Briefing

The Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development (TCBEED) Quarterly Report is our newest addition to the items produced by the Center's staff. The report's purpose is to keep the community informed as to the activities being undertaken by the TCBEED such as new additions to the product line, ongoing research, additions to the Center's staff, modifications to current channels of data dissemination, as well as, changes to the Center's web site.

Since my arrival, the Center's staff and I have worked non-stop to prioritize activities to ensure that all facets of the Center are addressed during the remodeling stage. The changes to come will be extensive, and the addition of new information and data sets are being secured.

The *Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development Quarterly Report* will be the publication to keep you informed of any new services and changes to familiar sites and products.

We look forward to the challenges, but we also look forward to providing you with an enhanced TCBEED.

—Herbert A. Molina, Director of the TCBEED



Herbert A. Molina
Director of the TCBEED

Current Activities

With a change in directorship comes changes in the focus of an operation, the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development (TCBEED) is no different than any other organization. Since the arrival of the new director, Herbert A. Molina, the Center's staff has been in constant meetings to provide background and historic information to the Center's newest director in order to provide a basis from which to work on new methods and procedures to improve the data, information and research.

An inventory of the current data sets was conducted, and a listing of new data to acquire was generated in order to augment the data already available at the Texas Center. This data will include more regional and binational data.

More practical research of the City of Laredo, Webb County and the surrounding areas will help foster economic development and growth. The Center has several projects in various stages of planning or progression. Upon their completion, these studies will provide clearer observations of the area's activities.

These studies are in the very capable hands of the Center's staff: Herbert A. Molina, Director of the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development, who brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise of more than

26 years of senior management experience in transferring technology domestically and internationally. Jacqueline Benavides, Data and Information Specialist, is the first point of contact for research and data questions, and has worked with various state and federal agencies to acquire and maintain these data sets during her 18 years of service with the university. Heleodoro (Leo) Lozano, Database Specialist, provides technical and programming development to the Center for data and information dissemination. He draws from eight years of professional experience at the Center. Baldomero G. Garcia, Jr., Program Manager, draws from almost 20 years of data management and data dissemination at Texas A&M International University under the TCBEED, and the Office for the Study of U.S.-Mexico Trade Relations, and the NAFTA Information Center.



The Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development working alongside you today for a better tomorrow.

Profile: Texas Center Data User

William H. Gruben, Ph.D. is the Director of the A.R. Sanchez, Jr. School of Business Ph.D. Program in International Business at Texas A&M International University.

Gruben served at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas as vice president, chief international economist and director of the Dallas Fed's Center for Latin American Economics. His research focuses on international trade, international capital flows, currency regimes and banking—chiefly as these subjects apply to developing countries, in particular those of Latin America.

Gruben holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Texas at Austin. He worked as a research associate at the university's Institute for Latin American Studies and its Center for Economic Development. He has served on the faculty of Economics at Southern Methodist University and on the faculty of International Management Studies at the University of Texas at Dallas.



Profile: Texas Center Data User

Pablo Camacho Gutiérrez, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Economics, A.R. Sanchez, Jr. School of Business at Texas A&M International University.

Camacho has worked as a policy analyst with the Consumers Union Southwest. He served as a deputy director at the Mexican Secretariat of Commerce. He also served as head of the Electricity Rates Department at the Mexican Secretariat of the Treasury. His research is driven by applied econometrics and includes international economics, finance and fiscal federalism.

Camacho holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Texas at Austin. He has served as an adjunct professor in the School of Business Administration at St. Edward's University, an assistant instructor in the Economics Department of the University of Texas at Austin, and a visiting instructor in the College of Economics at the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León.

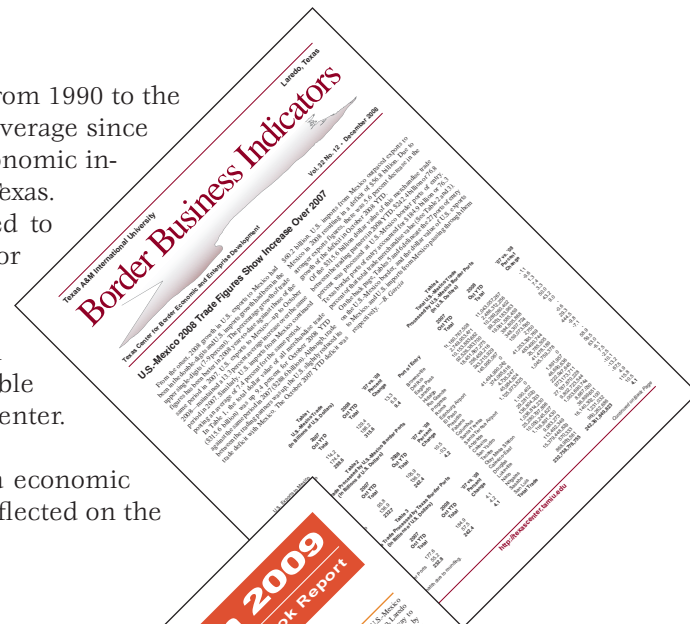


Border Business Indicators

The *Border Business Indicators (BBI)*, a Texas Center publication from 1990 to the present, has been in existence in a variety of formats and areas of coverage since the 1980s. In its present configuration, the *BBI* covers twenty-two economic indicators for cities along the Rio Grande from Brownsville to El Paso, Texas.

On March 2003, the *Border Business Indicators* was reformatted to provide a more concise and "fast read" of the economic indicators for those cities on the Texas-Mexico border. In this current iteration, U.S.-Mexico trade information was incorporated as part of the monthly offerings in the *BBI*. Along with the inclusion of trade data, the fifteen indicators in the *BBI* publication were synchronized to the searchable data sets available on the on the Texas Center web site: <http://texascenter.tamui.edu>.

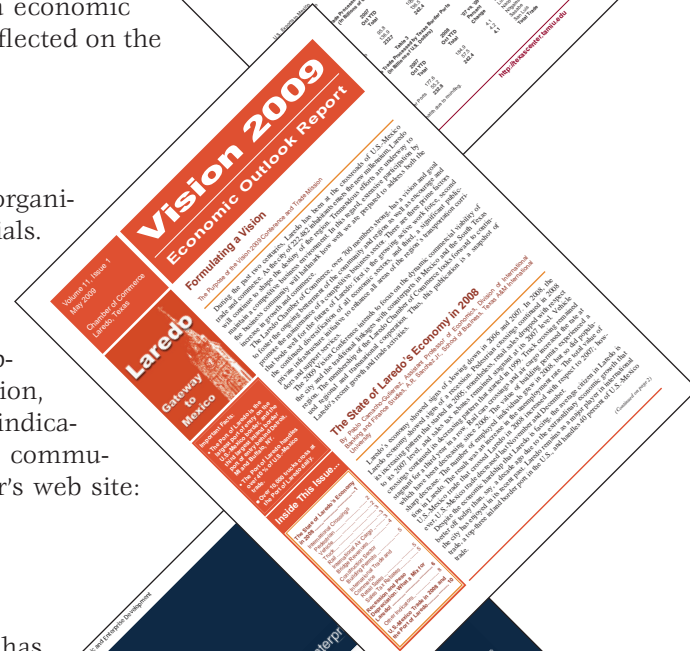
In the future, acquisition, capture and maintenance of new area economic data will be chronicled in the *Border Business Indicators* and will be reflected on the Texas Center web site to provide the most up-to-date data available.



Vision Economic Outlook Report

The Texas Center's ongoing work with business and community organizations may result in a variety of collaborative publications and materials. One such publication is the *Vision Economic Outlook Report*.

The *Vision Economic Outlook Report* is a joint publication which is prepared in cooperation with the Laredo Chamber of Commerce and has been in publication since the 1990s. The publication is distributed at the Vision Conferences held annually. Like its parent publication, the *Vision Report* provides a view of the City of Laredo's economic indicators, trade data and a timely point of the interest that may affect the community. It is published once a year and is freely available at the Center's web site: <http://texascenter.tamui.edu>.



Texas Center Web Site

Since it first came on-line in 1998, the Texas Center's web site has been available to the public and has provided economic and trade data. From 2001, the Center has added searchable data directly from our data sets. In addition, links to other resources were included to guide users to other sites with valuable data and information. Subsequently, specialty publications were added to the site providing insight into the region.

As the new decade approaches, the Center staff is working on plans to offer new data searches, filters, and reports. Along with more refined search tools and reports, the Center will add new data sets for the area. If you have not visited our site recently, do so as we start to upgrade our site <http://texascenter.tamui.edu>.



Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development Quarterly Report Summer 2009 is prepared by the Center's staff for the purpose of communicating to the public the Center's mission, activities and services available to the area.

Have any questions about the Center, feel free to contact us at:

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